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Masters of Men

A Retrospect in Presidential Politics

DANIEL J. RYAN

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"James G. Blaine was a candidate for the nomination for the third time. As in 1880 he was the phantom across Sherman's path to the White House."

Masters of Men

A Retrospect in Presidential Politics

BY
DANIEL J. RYAN

With Eight Contemporary Portraits

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To My Fellow Members of The Kit Kat Club,
in acknowledgment of
"Some Little Glimpses of Literature and Life."

MASTERS OF MEN

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MASTERS OF MEN

I

OHIO IN NATIONAL POLITICS

IN THE presidential turmoil of 1884 there was no more prominent, pugnacious, nor noisy State than Ohio. In fact since the organization of the Republican party her State influence has been such that she has been one of its greatest and most controlling factors. Of the ten nominees for president of the Republican Party since 1856, four of them, Hayes, Garfield, McKinley, and Taft, were nominated from Ohio; two others, Grant and Harrison, were born and reared in that State although presented from others. This tendency to occupy the center of the stage in the political affairs of the nation is neither accidental nor recent. From its very origin Ohio participated largely in national affairs, and even before its admission to the Union it was a storm center in federal politics.

The conflict over Statehood between Edward Tiffin and his Virginia associates of the

Scioto Valley representing the Democracy of Thomas Jefferson, and Governor Arthur St. Clair, leading the Federalists of Marietta, first brought Ohio into national politics. Its early settlers were men of high and positive character, well educated, and came into the State for the sole purpose of building up homes and creating a great western commonwealth. Unlike many other States that were settled, and many other settlements made before and since, the men who laid the foundations of Ohio came neither for conquest nor for the chase. They were not tramps nor trappers, victors nor vagrants. The only time that was given to hunting and adventure was that which was necessary to the building of a home and giving it sustenance. Their leaders had served their country in the Revolutionary War; they came across the Alleghenies with college educations, from homes of culture in Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New England. It was but natural then, that these men should have positive ideas on governmental affairs. They had well defined political views and convictions and lined up clearly either with Hamilton or Jefferson. They were as aggressive as they

were positive; and given these two dispositions you will produce men who love political conflict and public honors, and who think enough of their party to give time, labor and thought to its success.

Later on, their descendants, reinforced by the best racial types of other lands, participated, as did their fathers, in the settlement of all great national questions. They became involved, for and against, in the plans of Aaron Burr, and it was in Ohio, at Marietta and Chillicothe and Cincinnati that his friends were the warmest and his enemies the bitterest. It was just as natural for the Ohioans to participate in this sensational intrigue, or dream, call it what you will, as it was to engage in any other political fight. It was Edward Tiffin, Ohio's first Governor, and the head of the Jeffersonian party that suppressed Burr's plans, and it was John Smith, one of Ohio's first United States Senators, that met extinction and disgrace by reason of his supposed alliance with the ex-Vice President. This was all politics, and Ohio men drifted into it naturally. So, in the War of 1812, it was Ohio that furnished to the western border the great-

er part of the troops that scattered in defeat the last remnants of British aggression on American soil, and it was her political leaders, Harrison, Cass, McArthur and Meigs that raised and led her militia to victory. The world knows her part in the Civil War and the great characters which she contributed to its history. Nearly every administration at Washington, since the admission of Ohio to the Union, has seen her sons in the first places in the government.

There is a proverbial sneer as to the office-seeking and office-holding "Ohio man," but nevertheless, to use a modernism, he has "made good," and his public career has illumined the pages of American history, and added lustre to the fame of his country. The roll call of "office-seeking" and "office-holding" Ohioans challenges the admiration of history. They have given strength and glory to the Nation. Her sons, reared on a soil plowed and planted by the descendants of Puritan and Cavalier have fought for place, honor, and power, and have won. The past, as Webster said of Massachusetts, is at least secure. And all this comes from political conflict, from the

"Garfield, the golden-mouthed, in presenting Mr. Sherman's name to the Convention in 1880, did it with such consummate power and eloquent grace that he nominated himself."

contest of men of thought and action for that much sought power which ambition craves, and for which all that men have, is freely given.

And the result of all this storm and conflict in Ohio's history? Here it is, and let him who sneers at politics and politicians read well and think, for he is confronted with primal types, developed in political struggles, which make nations great. Seven Presidents: William Henry Harrison, Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes, James A. Garfield, Benjamin Harrison, William McKinley and William H. Taft. Two Vice Presidents: Thomas A. Hendricks and Charles W. Fairbanks. Three Presidents pro tem of the United States Senate: B. F. Wade, Allen G. Thurman and John Sherman. Nine Justices of the Supreme Court: John McLean, S. P. Chase (Chief Justice), Morrison R. Waite (Chief Justice), Stanley Mathews, Noah H. Swayne, Edwin M. Stanton, William B. Woods and William R. Day. Four Secretaries of State: Lewis Cass, John Sherman, William R. Day and John Hay. Six Secretaries of the Treasury: Thomas Ewing, Thomas Corwin, S. P. Chase, John Sherman, William Windom,

and Charles Foster. Nine Secretaries of War: Lewis Cass, John McLean, Edwin M. Stanton, U. S. Grant, W. T. Sherman, Alphonso Taft, Stephen B. Elkins, Russell B. Alger and William H. Taft. Five Secretaries of the Interior: Thomas Ewing, J. D. Cox, Columbus Delano, John W. Noble and James R. Garfield. Five Attorneys General: Henry Stanberry, Alphonso Taft, Edwin M. Stanton, W. H. Miller, and Judson Harmon. Four Postmasters General: Return J. Meigs, John McLean, William Dennison and Frank Hatton. One Secretary of Agriculture: Jeremiah Rusk.

In the severe training school of politics, nearly all of these men developed and equipped themselves for the duties and successes of their National careers. Nothing came easily; in county, state and national conventions they made the fight for power and honor, which was afterwards fructified into lasting and honorable fame. They were the victors in a long series of intellectual combats, and they all had, as a necessary foundation, characters of great probity and deep morality.

No stronger evidence of the value of the po-

litical training which Ohioans acquired in their history is seen, than in the position that State had held in the National Conventions of the Republican party. In almost every contest for the nomination for the Presidency in that party, she has figured as a dominating factor. It was a well-schooled politician from Ohio that seized Opportunity in her flight, and made Abraham Lincoln the Republican nominee in 1860. Just before the result of the third ballot was announced, one and one-half votes being lacking to make a nomination, David K. Carter of Ohio, said, "I arise, Mr. Chairman, to announce the change of four votes of Ohio from Chase to Abraham Lincoln," and by those words was determined a destiny for the plain country lawyer that led him to the Presidency and immortal fame. And in 1876 when the next political contest for the high office took place, it was the strategy and wisdom of Ohio men that, amidst the clash of political giants like Blaine, Morton, Conkling and Bristow, secured the nomination for their high-minded, but unpretending Governor, Rutherford B. Hayes. Again in 1880, in the midst of a similar conflict of intellectual and noted

leaders of the party, an Ohioan was the choice. Over Grant, Blaine, Sherman, Edmunds and Windom, the National Convention nominated James A. Garfield, who was one of the most accomplished politicians Ohio ever produced. And it may be remembered that of the seven candidates before that Convention, four of them were native-born Ohioans. So it was at a later date, 1896, when William McKinley was nominated for the Presidency, that the great honor came only through labor and effort.

II

JOHN SHERMAN, STATESMAN

IT IS apparent then, that, from her political history, she was simply playing her accustomed part in National politics when Ohio in 1884 appeared in the Republican contest for the Presidential nomination, with John Sherman as her candidate. Mr. Sherman reluctantly entered the race, as his close friends of that day will readily testify. His failure in the National Convention of 1880 to secure the nomination was the most grievous disappointment of his life. He could never get rid of the feeling that, had his friends been true to him in that Convention, he would have been President of the United States. In this defeat he was a great example of the inappreciation of the American public of its truly towering national characters. At that time, 1880, John Sherman was easily the foremost statesman of his country, and in his constructive political career ranked with Gladstone and Bismarck. Entering public life in ante-bellum

times, he took rank in his first congressional term, which commenced with the Thirty-Fourth Congress in 1855, as an important political personage. Slavery was in its death struggle, and it was largely due to his courage and leadership that public sentiment was directed against it.

In the House of Representatives he typified more than any other man, the rapidly rising antagonism among the conservative anti-slavery people of the North. Although opposed to slavery, he never believed in the radical position of the Abolitionists as advocated by those eminent Ohioans, Wade and Giddings. He opposed its extension and arrogant domination in National politics, knowing that it was an institution that time would destroy. Like the Fathers of the Republic, he believed that it was a grave evil, but was willing to let it rot to death in its own territory. With Lincoln, he believed that this government could not endure permanently half slave and half free, and as the day of the ultimate extermination of slavery approached, he was abreast of every movement looking to its abolition. In the contest for the Speakership

of the Thirty-Sixth Congress, in 1859, he was a martyr to anti-slavery expressions that he would neither apologize for, nor withdraw. His superb, yet quietly positive courage was demonstrated in the investigation of the troubles in Kansas, which was practically conducted under his management amidst surroundings of overt unfriendliness and personal danger. In the Senate he grew to the grandest proportions capable in public life. In the Cabinet he had attained the heights of human statesmanship.

Garfield, the golden-mouthed, in presenting Mr. Sherman's name to the Convention in 1880, did it with such consummate power and eloquent grace that he nominated himself. His speech on Sherman, and Ingersoll's on Blaine, four years before, are the masterpieces of American convention oratory. The great career of the candidate was a worthy theme for the master orator who presented it, and it gave an inspiration that even the occasion could not furnish. As it is read today, after nearly a third of a century has passed, there is little wonder that its Jovian bolts of oratory from its great and impressive author should

have won the loyalty of the seething and swaying delegates from the candidates that were far away. They could see and hear and feel Garfield, and his eloquence was a siren's symphony that made them forget their principals at home. Neither historian nor orator nor poet could picture Sherman in a stronger light than he was pictured on that occasion. After he had wound the coils of his fascinating eloquence around the Convention in an oration glistening with the adornments of rhetoric, Garfield closed with this peroration:

"I am about to present a name for your consideration—the name of a man who was a comrade and associate and friend of nearly all of the noble dead whose faces look down upon us from these walls tonight. A man who began his public career in public service twenty-five years ago, whose first duty was courageously done in the days of peril on the plains of Kansas, when the first red drops of that bloody shower began to fall which finally swelled into the deluge of war. He bravely stood by young Kansas then, and returning to his seat in the National Legislature, through all the subsequent years his pathway has been marked by

"At that time, 1880, John Sherman was easily the foremost statesman of his country, and in his constructive political career ranked with Gladstone and Bismarck."

labors worthily performed in every department of legislation. You ask for his monuments—I point you to twenty-five years of National statutes. Not one great beneficent law has been placed upon our statute books without his intelligent and powerful aid. He aided in formulating the laws that raised our great armies and navies and carried us through the war. His hand was seen in the workmanship of those statutes that restored and brought back 'the unity and the married calm of States.' His hand was in all that great legislation that created the war currency, and in the still greater work that redeemed the promises of the Government, and made the currency equal to gold; and, when at last he passed from the halls of legislation into a high executive office, he displayed that experience, intelligence, firmness and poise of character which has carried us through a stormy period of three years, with one-half the public press crying 'Crucify him!' and a hostile Congress seeking to prevent success. In all this he remained unmoved until victory crowned him. The great fiscal affairs of the Nation and the vast business interests of the country he

guarded and preserved while executing the law of resumption, and effected his object without a jar and against the prophecies of one-half the press and all of the Democracy of this continent. He has shown himself able to meet with calmness the great emergencies of the Government. For twenty-five years he has trodden the perilous heights of public duty, and against all the shafts of malice has bared his breast unharmed. He has stood in the blaze of that fierce light that beats against the throne, but its fiercest ray has found no flaw in his armor, no stain upon his shield. I do not present him as a better Republican or a better man than thousands of others that we honor, but I present him for your deliberate and favorable consideration. I nominate John Sherman of Ohio."

And yet with this record he was but third in the race, receiving his highest vote—120—on the thirtieth ballot. His State never was united for him; nine delegates from Ohio persistently voted for Blaine. Mr. Sherman was always a philosophic loser, but this contest left a bitterness in his heart that stayed there for the rest of his life. He believed that he was

the logical candidate for that year. Indeed, he has left in his "Recollections" written remarks to that effect.

Senator Sherman's friends, however, were not content to let his defeat pass unnoticed. After the convention there were mutterings in the Ohio press intimating treachery at Chicago. Governor Charles Foster, a delegate-at-large, was charged with infidelity, although a special confidant and representative of Mr. Sherman.

The criticisms and charges, both by newspapers and delegates, brought forth a letter of explanation and defense from Foster to Sherman, which the latter answered with characteristic frankness and generosity. In his letter dated June 30, Mr. Sherman said: "It was distinctly stated to me, by delegates and friends of delegates present in the convention, that they proffered the votes of large portions of their respective delegations to you with the understanding that they were to be cast for me whenever you indicated the proper moment. This was specifically said as to Indiana, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and the Blaine portion of the Pennsylvania delegation. It

was said you prevented Massachusetts from voting for me from about the tenth to the fifteenth ballot on Monday, that nine of the Connecticut held themselves ready to vote for me on your call, but that you put it off, and Harrison is quoted as saying that twenty-six votes from Indiana were ready to be cast for me Monday, at any time after a few ballots, but they were withheld on account of representations from the Ohio delegation. Mr. Billings of Vermont is quoted as saying that the Vermont delegation, with two or three exceptions, were ready to vote for me, but were discontented with the position taken by you, and doubted whether you desired their vote for me." Mr. Sherman was not only a great statesman but he was also a great politician. He was not a man to "cry over spilt milk," and he therefore had no disposition to keep up a feud with Governor Foster. So he dropped the matter and took the Governor's loyalty at his word. His (Sherman's) first impulse was to send Foster the whole mass of letters, from delegates and others attending the convention, charging his disloyalty. But this, on consideration, he decided to forego, because, said he,

"This would only create a controversy and, perhaps, betray confidence which I could not do."

With this unpleasant aftermath Sherman's first candidacy for the nomination for the Presidency took its place among the similar failures of equally great men.

III

PREPARING FOR A CONTEST

THEREFORE, when another presidential year rolled around, and the friends of Sherman in Ohio again called upon him to come forward as a candidate, he responded with a marked lack of enthusiasm. The old ambition seemed dulled. To the public press of his State he said: "I am in no sense a candidate, and would not make an effort for the nomination. I would not even express my opinion as to who should be delegates from my own district, or what their action should be. Four years ago I thought it best to be a candidate; I believe that the logic of events at that time justified such action. The reasons I would not state. Now there is no such condition, and I would not enter a contest even for an endorsement of my own constituency."

Nevertheless, Mr. Sherman became a candidate—rather what is known in politics as a receptive candidate; that is, one who desires an office, but prefers not to display an unusual

ambition for the same. He permitted his friends to maintain an active propaganda in his behalf. He was never a popular man in the accepted sense of that word. No man ever slapped him on the back and said "Hello, John!" His dignity, great ability, intellectual strength and lofty character were acknowledged by all, and he commanded universal respect, that while cordial was diffident and distant. But with all this, his State gave him a divided allegiance.

James G. Blaine was a candidate for the nomination for the third time. As in 1880 he was the phantom across Sherman's path to the White House. Of a diametrically opposite temperament and character, he commanded a following that was passionately attached to his fortunes. He was a man of long experience in politics and great brilliancy of intellect. He possessed a pronounced social disposition as well as that indefinable psychological attribute, which, for want of a better name. we call personal magnetism; gifted with the graces of oratory, he directed them to playing upon the sentiments and passions of men. In his long career in Congress he never constructed an

idea into legislation, nor ever proposed a solution of a problem. He was a great orator, a first-class debater and a consummate politician. He was the Pied Piper of his day in politics, and the charms of his flute chained millions of his countrymen to his heels and he led them into the cavern of defeat. They followed him with the blind devotion that the Mohammedan follows the crescent. And like Henry of Navarre, wherever Blaine's plume waved, there was the thickest of the fight, and there his loyal followers were to be found.

The contrast between these two men was vivid. Sherman did things; Blaine talked about them. Blaine held to his friends with hooks of steel; Sherman had to be introduced to them quadrennially. Sherman was scrupulously jealous of his public and private integrity, and for his closest friends would not use his office. Blaine, to put it mildly, was so anxious to help his friends that his biographers have ever since been busy explaining the acts of friendship. Sherman was totally devoid of literary ability, and his "Recollections" is the only work of his life that disappointed his friends; while, on the contrary, Blaine's

"Twenty Years of Congress," and his funeral oration on Garfield, which belongs to the sublime and beautiful in literature, are monuments that will preserve his name long after his political career is forgotten. Sherman was popular with the business man, the banker, and the thinker; Blaine was the idol of the rank and file, of the men in the trenches.

It was between these two leaders that the sentiment of the Republican party in Ohio was divided, and this division confronted McKinley when he arrived in Cleveland to preside over the State Convention of 1884. He was easily the most conspicuous figure, next to Mr. Sherman, in the State, and his reception as he assumed the chair, was worthy even of a presidential candidate. He was received with an enthusiasm that indicated the most sincere loyalty and admiration. Fresh from his victorious debate in Congress, amidst the cheers of the convention and the air of "See the Conquering Hero Comes," it was plain to be seen that he had secured a firm place in the hearts of his fellow Ohioans. The young men of Ohio, the great Western Reserve and McKinley's own district were for Blaine. The "Plumed

Knight" was McKinley's own choice. In his speech as chairman, he made no reference to the presidential contest, and all through the performance of his duties he maintained an impartial parliamentary poise that won for him the unstinted confidence of the contending factions.

The real contest of presidential strength between the Blaine and Sherman forces came in the selection of the delegates-at-large to the National Convention. The result was the naming of William McKinley, Joseph B. Foraker, Marcus A. Hanna, and William H. West for those positions.

McKinley was selected over his most pronounced protests, he even going so far as to refuse to recognize his nomination or to announce votes in his favor. He said he had promised his friends that he would not be a candidate as long as Marcus A. Hanna was in the field, and did not desire to break his word. There were cries of "No," "No," and "You cannot withdraw," but he persisted in preventing his election. Finally Gen. Charles H. Grosvenor put the question to the convention, which by a rising vote unanimously named him, totally

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ignoring all questions of presidential choice, as well as McKinley's views on promises made to his friends. He was already too big a man in his party to be bound by the conditions and limitations applicable to the ordinary politician.

Joseph B. Foraker, then in his thirty-eighth year, was elected delegate-at-large also by unanimous vote. He was in the beginning of a public career that has since placed him in the list of the great characters of the Nation. The year before he had made a canvass for the Governorship and was defeated, but only after a campaign distinguished for its brilliancy and courage. The advance movement of the Republican party of Ohio in taxing and regulating the liquor traffic had won for it the opposition and resentment of the liquor dynasty, then more powerful than now, and the result was the election of Judge Hoadly, one of the most distinguished lawyers of the State. Foraker, confident and aggressive, conducted his canvass with great success, and although defeat met him at the polls he had won the admiration and respect of his party. The development of self-poise and his attractive oratory, with his

high personal character, found him recognized at the end of the canvass as one of the coming characters of the Republican party of Ohio, and when he attended the State Convention following his defeat, instead of being consigned to oblivion, or even obscurity, he was regarded as a proper and logical delegate from the State-at-large to the National Convention. More than this, his position commanded respect for he was looked upon as the next candidate for Governor, and he had already rallied around him an aggressive and brilliant following which he retained through a long and progressively distinguished career. In addition he was the acknowledged leader of the Sherman forces in the State, and to him was committed the management of Mr. Sherman's campaign, and the honor of presenting his name to the National Convention, as chairman of the Ohio delegation.

The third delegate at large elected unanimously was Marcus A. Hanna—then plain Mark Hanna of Cleveland. He was well known to convention-goers in Ohio, but he had no reputation in politics beyond his local surroundings. As a successful business man he

indulged in politics from a sense of duty and to help his friends. And it may be remarked that he liked the game. Up to this time he had never figured in a National Convention, but he was recognized as one of the substantial and generous supporters of the Republican party in Cleveland and the Western Reserve. He was an intimate friend of Garfield, and was one of his closest advisers in the campaign of 1880. He favored Senator Sherman for the Presidency with as much loyalty as Major McKinley did that of Mr. Blaine.

William H. West, after a spirited canvass, was elected as the fourth delegate at large. He was a distinguished lawyer of Ohio, a warm friend and admirer of Blaine, and was recognized as the aggressive leader of that faction in Ohio. He had been Attorney General of the State, a Judge of the Supreme Court, and was defeated as a Republican nominee for Governor in 1877. The loss of his sight and his powerful oratory gave him the name of "The Blind Man Eloquent." Tall, gaunt, blind and impressive, he had swayed audiences in Ohio in every campaign since the beginning of the Republican party. He led the Blaine

forces with such enthusiasm and strength, and pleaded his cause with such powerful appeals, that it was no wonder that his chief should have requested him to present his name to the Chicago convention. For this also may have been the added reasons that both were natives of Washington county, Pennsylvania, both started life by teaching school in Kentucky in the late forties, and this friendship of their early careers was kept burning all the while. Blaine was basically sentimental and such things weighed with him.

This was Ohio's "Big Four" in 1884, and no State in the Union sent to Chicago that year a stronger delegation-at-large. Three of these men acquired in after years great National fame, and at the convention all four capably maintained the different ideas they represented, and reflected honor upon themselves and their State. No other delegation so deeply stamped its impress upon the proceedings and result of the convention.

From the State Convention McKinley returned to Washington, and from that time to the day of his unseating, was in the midst of

the strenuous conflicts attending the tariff bill and his own contest. On the night of the 27th of May he left Washington, the scene of his public labors for the past seven years, as a private citizen, to enter a new field and to gain new honors.

IV

"IN CHICAGO IN THE HEAT OF JUNE"

THE Eighth National Convention of the Republican Party met at Chicago, June 3rd, 1884.

It was the most remarkable gathering ever assembled under the auspices of the party. No convention since has ever approached it in character. Here could be seen the greatest and wisest of Republican thought and leadership. There were the scholar-politicians of the East—Andrew D. White, George William Curtis and Henry Cabot Lodge. Three men afterwards elected President sat as delegates—Benjamin Harrison, William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt. Future Cabinet Ministers mingled in the deliberations—Richard M. Thompson, Russell A. Alger, James A. Gary, John D. Long, and Redfield Proctor. Two score of the delegates were, or became subsequently, United States Senators. As the highest forum of a political party it was

"McKinley was one of the attractive and much sought for characters of the convention."

a gratifying example of representative government within partisan lines.

McKinley arrived on the scene on the 1st, and was in consultation with the Blaine men from the start. He did not come with the crowds from his district which had arrived the day before, because he was detained by a Decoration Day oration at his home. The car that contained the Blaine enthusiasts and their delegates from the Western Reserve districts was decorated with a mammoth oil painting of their candidate, and the mottoes, "Blaine, the Plumed Knight, the People's Choice," and, "The Eighteenth Ohio District is Solid for Blaine." McKinley's attitude was well understood among his friends. His first choice was for Blaine; he did not believe Mr. Sherman could be nominated. If the time ever came in the convention when that was possible, McKinley would help do it. But Ohio was hopelessly divided. The popularity of Blaine had broken down all State pride, and among the younger element he was the political idol of the hour. The choice of Blaine did not mean factitious opposition to Sherman. It was not like 1880, when Mr. Sherman saw plain evi-

dences of betrayal; but it was sheer senseless devotion to one who had hypnotized the Republican party. It was open and frank, and uncontrollable. Not that they loved Sherman less, but that they loved Blaine more.

Senator Sherman himself had a clear view of the situation and accepted it philosophically. Eleven days before the convention met, he wrote to a friend in Columbus, Ohio, who had written to him expressing hopes for his nomination, the following frank letter, dated from the United State Senate: "I am gratified that old friends, like yourself, still have confidence in me. This is more pleasing than success. I have not regarded my nomination as a probable thing. Nor have I, in any way, sought to influence the action of the Convention. If the nomination comes it will be more grateful if unsought, and I will then try to meet its responsibilities. If not, I shall be content without disappointment to abide the decision of the Convention. It is hardly to be expected that the Republicans of a State as large as Ohio should all have the same choice for President, especially of one who has been compelled to take so active a part in politics as

myself. Still the general good will of the delegation seems to be assured, and there is no one on it who could fairly be considered as an enemy. If they were entirely united and cordial they could easily nominate."

There was not the least bitterness in Mr. Sherman on account of the attitude of his own State's delegation. And to McKinley he was most cordial, and never stored up any feeling by reason of his fealty to Blaine. In truth, of all the candidates before the convention, next to himself, he preferred Blaine, and the latter's friends all understood that. He was positively opposed to President Arthur's nomination, not on personal grounds, but because he did not regard him as a man of sufficient calibre to occupy the high station which he filled, and was again aspiring to. He looked upon him as a politician pure and simple, and accidentally elevated by the lamentable death of Garfield.

Recurring to McKinley's attitude, this much in the interest of truth must be said. His position was one of ambiguity from the Sherman standpoint. It was felt indefinably that Mr. McKinley, although he did not publicly avow it until he reached the convention, was under

the fascination of Blaine. Three weeks before the convention Mr. Sherman firmly believed he would have McKinley's support. He wrote to Foraker on May 16: "I am now advised that McKinley wishes it distinctly understood that he is for me."

When the Convention assembled its delegates had already been worked up to fever heat in the struggles for their respective candidates. The real contest was between Blaine and Arthur. The only hope of Mr. Sherman's success lay in the combination of the field, but it was soon patent that this was unattainable, for he did not develop the strength even shown by Senator Edmunds of Vermont, or General Logan of Illinois. With McKinley and Foraker as leaders of the respective forces of Ohio in the Convention, her delegation sat quietly awaiting the momentous crisis when there should be a show of hands. Up to this time there was a great deal of uncertainty as to how many votes Sherman could secure in his own State, and the very uncertainty of it weakened and handicapped him. The dividing line was drawn in the vote electing a temporary chairman. Powell Clayton, of Arkansas, was

proposed by the National Republican Committee for that position. Ordinarily such recommendation is cheerfully acquiesced in by the convention. But this was not. Clayton was recognized as a Blaine supporter, and the field, led by Henry C. Lodge, moved to substitute John R. Lynch, a colored delegate from Mississippi. The Blaine men in the Ohio delegation, led by McKinley and Judge West, cast 23 votes for Clayton, and the Sherman delegates, under Foraker and Hanna, cast 22 for Lynch — one Ohio delegate absent or not voting. So the relative strength of Sherman and Blaine was disclosed, much to the disappointment of the former's friends. It was easy to see, notwithstanding the field won in the election of Mr. Lynch by a vote of 424 to 384, that it foreshadowed Mr. Blaine's nomination. He was easily the second choice of many more delegates.

The opposition to Mr. Blaine fought with terrific earnestness. Senator Edmunds' supporters, led by George William Curtis, hated Blaine with an intensity that was ominous. They said he could not carry New York by reason of the opposition to him among the In-

dependent Republicans of that State. The Arthur men, principally place holders of his administration, threatened sure defeat for the "Plumed Knight." The weakness of the opposition to Blaine was its failure to be able to unite on a candidate. But the truth was, he was the beloved idol of his party, and nothing could drive his followers away from him.

McKinley was one of the attractive and much sought for characters of the Convention. His tariff debates and his summary and unjust unseating from Congress were fresh in the mind of the public; added to this, his dignified and independent course in the Convention for Blaine made him one of the heroes of the day. His wisdom and influence in the party were recognized both in his State and out; his delegation presented him as their member on the Committee on Resolutions, and when that committee assembled he was unanimously elected its chairman. To him was committed the duty and responsibility of framing the platform of the Republican party, which he read with a really dramatic effect to the Convention on the third day. With a clear and resonant, yet not noisy voice, he was heard in every nook and

corner of the convention hall, and the well declaimed and eloquent paragraphs of the platform were received with rapturous applause.

Up to this time McKinley had sat mute in the convention; none of the debates provoked from him any expression. He was a counsellor for the Blaine people rather than their spokesman. Once during the session he was appealed to in bringing order out of the chaos into which the convention drifted in the third day. The courtly John B. Henderson, former United States Senator from Missouri, was selected as Permanent Chairman of the Convention. Ill health and weariness had robbed him of his old time energy and the convention "ran away with him," as the professional delegate expresses it. The utter inability to preserve any semblance of order became so apparent even to Mr. Henderson, that in sheer dismay and discouragement he called McKinley to the chair. His presence and impressive appearance, with a single determined thump of his gavel, changed a howling mob into a deliberative assembly. His voice controlled the Convention, and his rulings were as strong and

clear as a bugle call, and as conclusive as the orders of a general. The convention recognized a master hand, and surrendered without a protest.

The conspicuous position that Ohio occupied in the convention was emphasized by the fact that both Blaine and Sherman were to be nominated by delegates from that State. It was not to her credit that she exhibited such a disunited appearance, but it was striking, and lent much to the sensation of the convention. Likewise was the contrast between the two orators who were to present the claims of their respective candidates. Their persons and their speeches were so widely dissimilar that they were impressive from this standpoint alone. To have the two leading candidates before the convention advocated by a divided state delegation represented by two of her greatest public men had been witnessed in the past, but it was unprecedented when the state's own candidate was the first American statesman of his time.

In the roll-call of the states when Maine was reached Judge West from his seat in the Ohio delegation arose to nominate Blaine. It

"The third delegate-at-large elected unanimously was Marcus A. Hanna—then plain Mark Hanna of Cleveland. He was well-known to convention-goers in Ohio, but he had no reputation in politics beyond his local surroundings."

was an unusual scene in a convention. When the tall form of the "blind man eloquent" came into view it hushed the audience into expectancy. That he spoke for the popular candidate was soon apparent. Although he was surrounded by darkness the sunlight of his mind caught the telepathic sympathy of his auditors. His appeal for Blaine was dramatic, and his oratory drew upon his store of classic and historic learning. It was just such a speech as his subject demanded. It was full of ornate and passionate rhetoric. "Nominate him, and the shouts of September victory in Maine will be re-echoed back by the thunders of the October victory in Ohio. Nominate him, and the camp-fires and beacon-lights will illuminate the continent from the Golden Gate to Cleopatra's Needle. Nominate him, and the millions who are now waiting will rally to swell the column of victory that is sweeping on. In the name of a majority of the delegates from the Republican states and their glorious constituencies who must fight this battle, I nominate James G. Blaine of Maine."

Then the Blaine forces broke loose with a pandemonium of approval. An exhibition of

the craziness with which a crowd may be seized was presented. It is distinctively a National Convention product. It has no parallel in American life unless it is the wild and enthusiastic manifestations of the baseball "fan" in an exciting game. For a full half hour the Blaine delegates and the thousands of his spectator-supporters indorsed their candidate with frenzy, noise, cheers, and every expression that was at once vociferous and ecstatic. Ten thousand people that were sane a few minutes before commenced to howl, sing, clap their hands, stamp their feet, wave their hats, and dance. A man in the gallery solemnly makes the noise of a cuckoo as in a Swiss clock. Another raises his umbrella and cheers for Blaine. A comely young woman clad in white cries out in shrill tones from the gallery, "God bless Jim Blaine!" She knows not why, but the fair one feels that she is sustaining our American institutions. Above all she knows that her hero is the strongest Republican candidate. The climax of this saturnalia of enthusiasm is reached when a white helmet with a snowy plume is carried to the platform. It is the emblem of the Blaine cult. "Like an

armed warrior, like a plumed knight, James G. Blaine marched down the halls of Congress and threw his shining lance full and fair against the brazen forehead of every traitor to his country and every maligner of his fair reputation." So spoke Ingersoll in the Cincinnati convention in 1876; from that day Blaine was the "Plumed Knight" of American politics. So when the gaudy trapping of chivalry was raised aloft, again, like a great wave, the roar of enthusiasm rolled over the convention, and the scenes of the past minutes were repeated; then came the lull of exhaustion, and sanity reigned once more. So much at the opportune moment can a well-handled bauble do.

In the psychology of American political life there is no more potent and interesting fact than a National convention. There, may be seen the workings of the popular mind in its primal state. This is the era of the crowd, and the convention is the concentrated crowd. Thinking and acting *en masse* always has been, and always will be impulsive and illogical, and when unrestrained and undirected, invariably develops mental anarchy. Practically there is a suspension of the reasoning and thinking

faculties, and a substitution of a wild exhibition which is a cross between the recklessness of childhood and the irresponsibility of blithesome lunacy. From this it must not be inferred that such enthusiasm when unfolded is not honest and spontaneous. It is only in rare instances that it can be manufactured. Political leaders and the managers of great movements are well aware that these great exhibitions of human excitement are among the most valued agencies of success. They know the psychology of the popular mind. Above all it must be controlled, and for this reason it must have its stage-settings, its entrances and its lights. The Blaine demonstration of the Chicago convention was theatrical, but it was real. The parade of the helmet of Navarre had its prototype in the procession that carried the rail, said to be split by Lincoln, in the Chicago convention of 1860. All such demonstrations which grow out of the imagination of the crowd must have a popular subject as a basis. This subject must possess prestige of a popular kind. In this Blaine had the advantage over Sherman. The latter's great achievements did not appeal to the admiration of the populace.

His accomplishments in affairs of state were beyond the understanding of the crowd. On the contrary Blaine's career was such as to make him a popular idol. He was continually in the limelight of the people. When he twisted the tail of the British lion every jingo in the land applauded. As he assailed the South and Jefferson Davis it aroused the spirit of a million partisans, and when he mercilessly attacked the Democratic party he won the applause of every Republican. These conditions explain the wild and lavish adulation of his followers; and it was utilized to the fullest extent by his managers.

Foraker's presentation of Sherman's name to the convention was from start to finish an entirely dissimilar affair. Devoid of all sensational settings it was not however without a distinct brilliancy. The spokesman for the great statesman was making his first appearance on the stage of national politics. Although only in his thirties, his aggressive candidacy for the Ohio governorship the year before had attracted attention throughout the country. His appearance was in striking contrast with the venerable Judge West. The

light of young manhood was on his face, dauntless courage in his eyes, and his whole bearing was of one who had superb command of himself. What the name of Sherman lacked in magnetism, Foraker soon supplied. As he reviewed the career of his candidate the convention in sheer admiration of the orator quickly surrendered. It was a triumph for Foraker. Discarding rhetoric, disdaining the frills of oratory, his style was more intellectual than magnetic, but the warmth, the directness, and his accomplished expression soon had the convention in the same stormy throes as in the demonstration through which it had just passed. In the first it was stirred by the name of Blaine, but now it rose and roared under the influence and force of a personal and magnetic power.

From whence comes this elemental force by which some men become gods upon the platform and swing at will the emotions of their listeners up and down and around? This power that starts the blood, or chills the spine, and compels admiration in enemies and rapture in friends? Whatever it is, there has always been in the history of the race men who

were its masters,—or, perhaps, the instruments of their own subconscious and mystic mentality. Mark Antony addressing the mob over the dead body of Cæsar illustrates it, as does Robespierre of the French Revolution. In our own annals Clay and Blaine are the archetypes.

When Foraker descended from the platform that day at Chicago ten thousand hearers felt that he too was gifted with the Promethean fire that withers, or strengthens the wills of men.

V

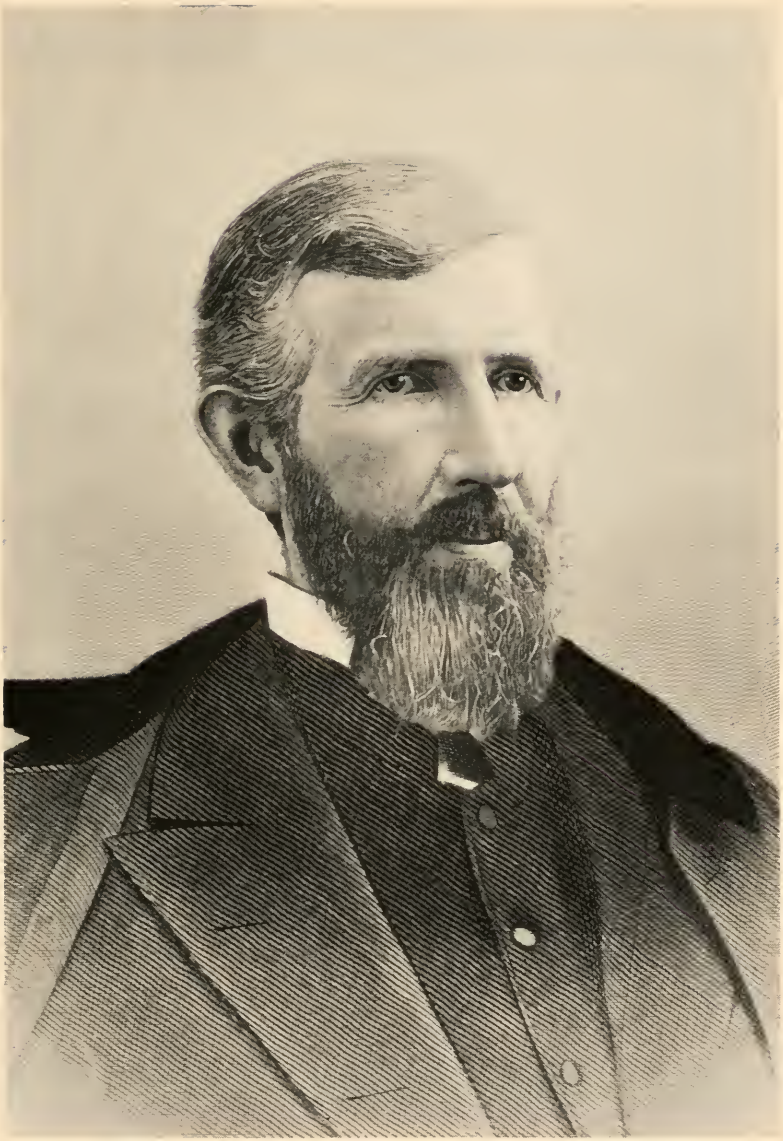
THE VICTORY OF THE "PLUMED KNIGHT"

N the fourth day of the convention, June 6th, the balloting for a candidate for the Presidency commenced. Ohio, on the first roll call, voted 21 votes for Blaine and 25 for Sherman; on the second ballot the result was 23 for Blaine and 23 for Sherman, and on the third ballot Blaine showed a decided majority—the vote being 25 for Blaine and 21 for Sherman. It was apparent that the increasing vote for Blaine would nominate him on the next ballot, when Foraker moved that the convention take a recess until the next day at ten o'clock. This was seconded by Silas B. Dutcher, of New York, an Arthur delegate. The motion sent a cold chill through the Blaine delegates. They remembered how in 1876 at Cincinnati, their leader was beaten by delay. They were well aware that their fortunes could be lost in a night. Confusion reigned and leadership was lacking; somebody called for a

roll call, and the followers of Blaine seemed in chaos. Finally, at the supreme moment, when others knew not what to say or do, McKinley, pale and self-possessed, and with a voice that was in itself a command, after addressing the chair, said: "Gentlemen of the Convention, I hope no friend of James G. Blaine will object to having the roll call of the States made. Let us raise no technical objection; I care not when the question was raised, the gentlemen representing the different States here have a right to the voice of this convention on this subject, and as a friend of James G. Blaine, I insist that all his friends shall unite in having the roll of States called, and then vote that proposition down." With hushed breath the convention listened to his words; here was a Sheridan turning defeat into victory, calling on his fleeing army to turn back and give fight. When McKinley said "and then vote that proposition down," all the old Blaine enthusiasm was again let loose, and the lines reformed. After a time the roll was called on Judge Foraker's motion to recess, and 364 delegates voted for it, and 450 against it. Ohio on the motion, voted ayes, 17; nays, 28. Blaine

was growing in Ohio, as well as in the convention, and McKinley's influence was apparent in the situation.

The refusal to recess and the vote on the third ballot showing Blaine in the lead, and Arthur second, worked the Convention into a fever heat. It also became known that Logan had telegraphed to his supporters to go to Blaine. All these circumstances made it apparent that the stampede had set in. Amidst the hurrying to and fro of delegates, McKinley and Foraker conferred as to the disposition of Ohio's votes on the fourth ballot. It was not a difficult thing to determine in the light of the impending result, as well as the existent friendly feeling for Blaine among Sherman's friends on the Ohio delegation. When Ohio was reached in the roll call for the fourth ballot, Judge Foraker arose, while an expectant hush spread over the Convention, and, addressing the chairman, said: "For what I supposed to be the best interests of the party, I presented to this convention the name of John Sherman. Also supposing it to be for the best interests of the party, we have until now faithfully and cordially supported him. Now also



"William H. West, after a spirited canvass, was elected as the fourth delegate-at-large. He was a distinguished lawyer of Ohio, a warm friend and admirer of Blaine, and was recognized as the aggressive leader of that faction in Ohio."

in the interests of the party, we withdraw him, and cast for James G. Blaine forty-six votes." The announcement was received by demonstrations of the wildest applause. It made the expected a reality, and the rhythmic cry of "Blaine! Blaine! Blaine of Maine!" shouted in unison by the thousands of spectators sounded like the cry of a new crusade.

"The third time is the charm," and the man whose name had been before three National Conventions had at last attained his longed for ambition. The announcement of Blaine's nomination by a vote of 541 against 272 for all others, was the signal for another exhibition of that temporary insanity which is a part of our National political conventions. A hurricane of cheering, a wild display of enthusiasm, a dramatic lifting of banners, processionals of ecstatic delegates, all showed that the nomination was a popular one. But there were some delegates in that Convention who were not taken off their feet, and perhaps they remembered what Garfield said in nominating Sherman four years before in that self same hall: "Not in Chicago in the heat of June, but at the ballot boxes of the Republic, in the quiet of

November, after the silence of deliberative judgment, will this question be settled."

In this convention McKinley won his first leadership in national politics. His career in the House of Representatives had impressed on the country his works as a patriotic and able legislator. His position at Chicago and the quiet and dignified manner in which he confronted every duty showed that he possessed tact, firmness and ability in dealing with men. Now that the storm had subsided and a sober level had been reached, those who had watched and studied the proceedings of the convention noted that McKinley was one of its dominant characters. He ruled it with sternness, he had framed the platform and planted in it the same doctrines of a protective tariff that he was contending for in Congress, and to crown it all he was one of the most powerful agencies in the nomination of Blaine. With this record supplemented by his Congressional life, he stood in the estimation of the people of the country in that class of public men that we call "famous."

He returned to his home to confront a troublous political situation. The General

Assembly of Ohio that met in January, 1884, was Democratic. The old habit of securing by "gerrymandering" what they could not win by fair elections, prompted a reconstruction of the Congressional districts of the State. McKinley was always legitimate prey in those days for Democratic legislatures. It is a noteworthy fact that every such legislature during his public life from 1876 to 1890, undertook by this method to keep him out of Congress. This year he found himself in a new district with a Democratic majority of about fifteen hundred votes. His new constituency on June 26th tendered him a unanimous nomination. He could have obtained such a nomination in any district of the State. Petty jealousies or personal rivalries no longer confronted him, for he was now regarded as a great national Republican representing ideas that could not be circumscribed by the narrow limits of a Congressional district. He never had had personal enemies, so he received the loyalty and support of his people, both as a duty and an honor on their part. Thus, for the second time, before in 1878, he started out to wrest from his

political opponents a seat in the Congress of the United States.

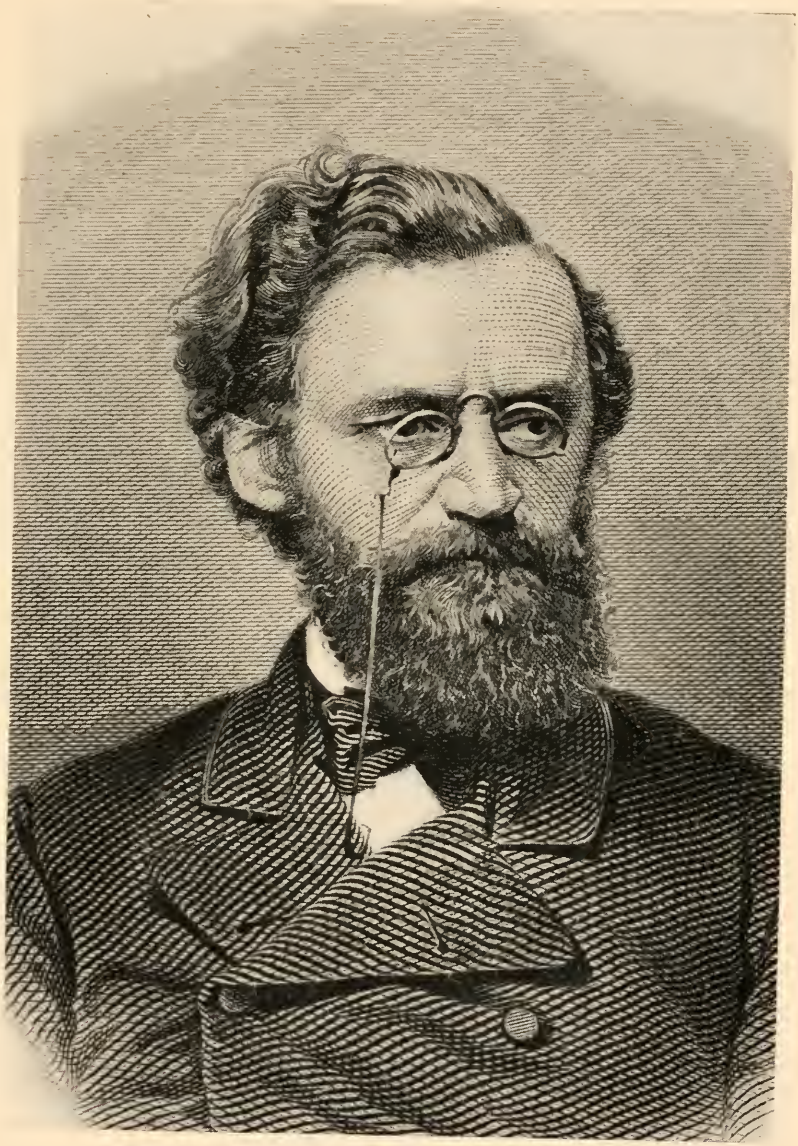
He loved campaigning and entered into the canvass with zest, but was not without anxiety both as to the success of the National ticket, and to his own election. He had observed at Chicago the bitter antagonism on the part of the so-called Independent Republicans, and he feared their work in the East. He knew also that Conkling's old friends were not exhibiting much enthusiasm for the ticket. He knew that his own district was Democratic, of the old-fashioned type, inheriting the prejudices and anti-Republican sentiment of war times. The uncertainty of the situation filled him with enthusiasm for the fray. From every stump in his district he pleaded for the maintenance of the tariff, and showed the effect that its reduction would have on the farmers and manufacturers, that he sought to represent. Nor did he confine his labors to his own district, but from all over the State came calls for his speeches.

VI

THE INDEPENDENT REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT

THE predictions and threats of George William Curtis and his Eastern associates made in the Chicago convention, that Mr. Blaine would be opposed by the so-called Republican Independents, took tangible form in a conference held in New York on June 17th. The meeting was held at the residence of Joseph Henry Harper, 269 Madison Avenue, and consisted of eighty-seven persons, twenty-six being from Boston, and the others from New York and Brooklyn. They were what was called "Free Traders" to a man—that is, they were for a tariff for revenue only, as opposed to the policy of a protective tariff. They were consequently opposed to the Republican party and its candidate on this ground. They had neither the courage nor the candor to frankly take the stand of the Democratic party on this question, but took the position that Mr. Blaine

was not personally an honest man, and therefore unfit for the Presidency. They were all men of well-meaning purposes, college professors, theorists, and a few importers, or men whose fortunes rested on importing. They were a class of Republicans that never stood high in the estimation of Garfield, McKinley or Blaine, on account of their pharisaical pretensions in politics. In a letter to Garfield dated December 10th, 1880, Mr. Blaine referred to this element of his party as "reformants by profession, the 'unco good.'" "They are to be treated," he wrote, "with respect, but they are the worst political advisers—upstarts, conceited, foolish, vain, without knowledge of measures, ignorant of men, shouting a shibboleth which represents nothing of practical reform that you are not a thousand times pledged to! They are noisy, but not numerous; pharisaical, but not practical; ambitious, but not wise; pretentious, but not powerful! They can be easily dealt with, and can be hitched to your administration with ease." This was the class of political aesthetes that Blaine found to be the bitterest enemies in his canvass. George William Curtis opened his



"Carl Schurz was the leading spokesman of the Independents. He was a profound student of public affairs, with an absolute and satisfied confidence that he was right on all political issues."

mud-batteries in Harper's Weekly soon after the conference, and he had to aid him the most powerful caricaturist in the country, Thomas Nast. And so it went all along the line of the Independent opposition; its press and orators spared neither the home, the private life nor the individual integrity of the Republican candidate for the Presidency. They invoked the filth and slander of gutter politics in a manner that the vilest tool of Tammany would turn from in disgust.

Carl Schurz was the leading spokesman of the Independents. He was a profound student of public affairs with an absolute and satisfied confidence that he was right on all political issues. His opinions were expressed with an air of authoritative omniscience. He was a ripe scholar and a master in the use of the English language, which he acquired through his habits of intense study and natural linguistic ability. He commanded attention whenever he wrote or spoke. He was a theorist and a dreamer. There has not been his like in American politics—either before or since his time. Exiled from his native land—Prussia—because he loved liberty, he fled to Switzerland,

thence to Germany, from there to Scotland, thence to Paris, thence to London, and finally landed in this country in 1852. He lived in New York and Philadelphia until 1855, when he settled in Wisconsin. Afterwards he moved to Michigan, then to Missouri and closed his years in New York. Always raising a commotion wherever he was, he was truly in the language of Byron, "a wild bird and a wanderer." He was as unsettled in the domain of thought as he was in his migration. In politics he was a gypsy wandering hither and thither through party territory and camping in none but for a night. His natural and Teutonic love of freedom prompted him to oppose slavery and rebellion with all his heart and we find his first political affections with the newborn Republican party. He was in the National convention of 1860, from Wisconsin, and labored earnestly for William H. Seward's nomination. He served his adopted country with fidelity during the war. Lincoln made him a Major General, but he displayed no military genius. He supported Grant in 1868, opposed his administration, and in 1872, he was one of that brilliant list of Liberal Re-

publicans who met at Cincinnati and nominated Horace Greely.

Of this "Anything-to-beat-Grant" convention he was the permanent chairman. Five weeks afterward he called a conference to bolt the convention over which he presided. This conference was composed of Carl Schurz, Jacob D. Cox, William Cullen Bryant, Oswald Ottendorfer, David A. Welles, and Jacob Brinkerhoff. It was composed of scholars in daily life, aestheticians in politics, and free traders in economics. Greeley's aggressive ideas on protection were more than they could stand. So this intellectual autocracy nominated a ticket after their own heart in the persons of William S. Groesbeck of Cincinnati and Frederick L. Olmstead of New York. The solemnity and assurance of the little band recalls Canning's story of the three tailors of Tooley Street, Southwark, who addressed a petition of grievances to the House of Commons beginning:—"We the people of England."

In 1876 Carl Schurz again allied himself with the Republican party and gave influential support to Rutherford B. Hayes. He

served in Hayes' cabinet and at the close of his term retired to a New York newspaper of the independent type. Here he had free exercise for his individual conceits. So when this campaign of 1884 opened he was ready in the name of morality and decency to lead the Independents against Blaine. No wonder that Richard Smith, the veteran editor of the Cincinnati Gazette, called him "the 'Flying Dutchman' of American politics."

Schurz pursued the Republican candidate with malignity and great effect throughout the campaign. His speeches were of a polished type and avoided all flavor of personal antagonism. Nevertheless, like his fellow Independents, Mr. Schurz had a grievance. In a political way, Blaine had a perfect contempt for him. The great Republican leader regarded him as a "professional foreigner" trading on the affection and loyalty of his fellow-countrymen of German birth and extraction. Schurz knew Blaine's opinion of him, and it added to his enthusiasm for pure politics and Democratic success.

There was some ground for criticism of Blaine's transaction while in public life, but

none for a charge of dishonesty or bribe-taking; yet there was just enough on which malignant slanderers could make a pretense of the charge of a crime, for such it would be if true. It was alleged that he had received $64,000 from the Union Pacific Railroad Company for services performed while in Congress. This charge was made the subject of investigation by the House Judiciary Committee, but it was not prosecuted to completion, Mr. Blaine having in the meantime taken his seat in the Senate. But it was dramatically discussed in the House by Blaine himself, and all the evidence read by him—as he expressed it—"in the presence of 44,000,000 of my countrymen." Senator Hoar of Massachusetts pronounced him triumphantly acquitted. As a matter of fact it was simply an exposure of Blaine's private business and had no relation to public affairs. His enemies said he had received bonds of the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad as a gratuity, and that the Union Pacific road had sold these bonds for his benefit. He produced letters from the officers of the company, and from the bank that was said to have cashed the draft, denying

that such a transaction ever occurred. Mr. Blaine further answering, said he bought and paid for the bonds at the market price to his financial loss. He was also accused of being the recipient of bonds of the Kansas Pacific Railroad, but he showed beyond controversy that it was his brother, who was one of the early settlers of Kansas, and that their names had been confused by the public scavengers, and further, the incident occurred before Blaine had ever entered Congress. But all these answers of Blaine had little effect upon his assailants. Notwithstanding that the incidents referred to were neither politically nor morally wrong, and that the transactions were strictly within the sphere of his private, and not of his public life, the muck-rakers merrily kept up the constant and cruel slanders against his honor.

Blaine at no time had the slightest idea that his ownership of the securities mentioned was improper or immoral. His struggle to secure the Mulligan letters, and his aversion to their publicity, which he finally furnished himself, was rather to avoid the mortification over the exposure of his own private business, than to

hide a public offense. Nevertheless, there was enough in all the business to keep him explaining and on the defensive personally throughout the campaign. The malignity and viciousness with which he was pursued by the Independents, even to his death, shows that a mob may be educated and wear dress suits, and yet possess the senseless and cruel bloodthirstiness of the commune.

McKinley had the greatest admiration and confidence in the Republican standard bearer, and early offered himself for every effort and sacrifice required by the campaign managers. He was in hearty accord with every principle that Blaine represented, and regarded the campaign waged against him by the Independents as simply the defection of the "Free Trade" element in the Republican party. And as to the charges against Blaine's integrity, McKinley, with Senator Hoar, simply viewed them as calumnies of political enemies that had not the manhood to oppose him for their real reasons.

As the campaign progressed, the opposition gained strength and assumed organization. The state of Maine held the first election of

the year, in September, and gave to its honored son the substantial and unusual majority of twenty thousand plurality. After this election the campaign managers persuaded Mr. Blaine to make a campaign through part of the West, which he did, much against his own judgment. But the subsequent events showed that it was not a mistake. When he reached Ohio he was joined by McKinley, and both, from that moving forum of American politics —the back platform of a Pullman car—addressed thousands on their tour in that State and Indiana.

VII

BLAINE IN OHIO

IN OHIO the candidate was received with tumultuous enthusiasm. There was no room here for the Independent movement. Blaine's magnetic presence roused the Republicans to the heights of political endeavor, and the State election which was held October 14th, three weeks before the Presidential election, showed the estimate Ohio had of his slanderers. He was especially anxious about this State. It was here that he passed months of the happiest time of his boyhood, when he visited his cousin, Mrs. Ewing, wife of the great Senator, Thomas Ewing. Two days before the election in the most critical part of the Ohio campaign, he visited Lancaster, and in response to a serenade referred to his boyhood days, saying: "My friends, I confess that in this place and at this time I hardly feel disposed to make any allusion to public affairs. The recollections that rush upon me as I stand here, carry me back through many years, to a time before most of you were born.

In 1840 I was a school boy in this town, attending the school of a Mr. William Lyon, a cultivated English gentleman (younger brother of the Lord Lyon, and uncle, I believe, of the British Minister at Washington), who taught with great success the youth of this vicinity. I know not whether he be living, but if he is, I beg to make my acknowledgments to him for his efficiency and excellence as an instructor." Then he pictured the old Lancaster of his boyhood, and referred to the great characters that came out of the quaint old town; to its distinguished lawyers—Thomas Ewing and Henry Stanberry; to its great Shermans—William T. and John. The whole speech was so full of human pathos that it had more effect in Ohio than any political speech that he had made. It touched the heart. It was a backward glimpse to boyhood days, and every man that read it felt his blood tingle and his eyes grow dim.

The State of Ohio the year before had elected the Democratic ticket by over twelve thousand plurality. In October, 1884, after Blaine, Sherman, Foraker, McKinley and all the lesser lights of the party had carried on a

canvass of the greatest activity and interest, the Republican State ticket was elected by over eleven thousand plurality. The result was most encouraging to Mr. Blaine, for in November he secured an increased vote and carried the state by thirty-one thousand over the vote for Mr. Cleveland.

McKinley, in addition to his speaking in Ohio, Indiana, New York and West Virginia, was busy in his own district and to aid him had the assistance of Blaine himself. This part of Ohio was especially devoted to the candidate for President, having, as we have seen, persistently supported him both in the State and National conventions. On the 7th of October, Mr. Blaine delivered a powerful and effective speech for McKinley at Canton, which probably had more to do in returning him to Congress than any event of the campaign. He paid McKinley the compliment of saying that "he was the ablest advocate of protection in his time," and charged "that this community would be derelict in its duty if it failed to elect him to Congress."

The community was not derelict, and the district that was carved out with a ready-made

Democratic majority of fifteen hundred, elected him by a majority of 2,029 over all opposition, composed of Democratic, Greenback, Labor and Prohibition candidates.

The general election resulted in the disastrous defeat of Mr. Blaine, owing to the loss of New York by a narrow margin. It carried with it the election of a Democratic House of Representatives.

* * * * * * *

The defeat of Blaine stunned the Republicans. Their candidate, like Henry Clay, was their personal idol, and his rejection cast his party into the deepest gloom. It was lamented by millions as a personal misfortune. It was no less appalling from a political standpoint. For the first time since "before the war" a Democrat was to occupy the Executive chair at Washington. To the generation that had grown up since Lincoln, this had always been regarded as one of the impossibilities. It was firmly believed that there could be no future for the party that was identified with slavery and secession; and "after us the Deluge."

Nevertheless, the Democratic party, spurned and rejected for a quarter of a century, stepped into the Seats of the Mighty, but the leaders of the opposition, while the heroes of defeat, still remained Masters of Men.

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